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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *January* the 24th, 1754.

Porrecto jugulo hiſtorias, captivus ut, audit. HOR.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

CAER CARADOCK, *Jan.* the 16th, 1754.

SIR,

YOUR paper upon HEARERS gave me that pleaſure which a ſeries of truths muſt always afford, to him who can witneſs for every one of them.

I WAS born and brought up in the principality of Wales, which from time immemorial muſt have been productive of the moſt thorough-bred, ſeaſoned and ſtanch HEARERS, ſince every gentleman of that country holds and aſſerts his right to be a TALKER by privilege of birth. I would not have you conclude from what I have ſaid above, that

that I am not as good a gentleman as the beſt (I mean of as good a family) though poverty and ill-fortune have doomed me to be forever a HEARER.

I WAS left an orphan in my earlieſt years: but I am not going to trouble you with the many misfortunes which conſtantly attended me to the age of forty; at which time I was a ſchoolmaſter without boys to teach, or bread to eat. At this period of my life I was adviſed by the parſon of our pariſh to go and enter myſelf in ſome large and wealthy family to be an UNCLE; which is a known and common term in Wales, of like ſignification with HEARER in England; the duties and requiſite qualifications being nearly the ſame, as will appear from the following ſhort inſtructions given me by my adviſer; viz. Never to open my lips, except for the well-timed utterance of, *indeed!*——*ſurpriſing!*——*prodigious!*——*moſt amazing!* But theſe only to be uſed at the proper intervals of the TALKER's fetching his breath, coughing, or at other pauſes; and the length of the admiration to be always adapted to, and particularly never to exceed, the aforeſaid intervals.

BUT in order to explain the method he took to qualify me ſtill farther, and inure me to patience, I muſt give you a ſhort hiſtory of this worthy parſon. He was truly, what he was called, a good ſort of a man, if charity, friendſhip and good humour can entitle a man to that character. I muſt not conceal the meanneſs of his education, in which he diſcovered, however, as great a genius as could poſſibly ariſe out of a ſtable and a kennel. He was a thorough ſportſman, and ſo good a SHOT, that the late ſquire took a fancy to him, made him his conſtant companion, and gave him the living. But that he might not be loſt in ſtudy and ſermon-making, he contrived to marry him to the daughter of the late incumbent, who had been taught by her father latin and metaphyſics, and exerciſed from twelve years old to forty in making themes and ſermons. As ſhe was by nature meagre and deformed, by conſtitution fretful and complaining, by education conceited and diſputatious, by ſtudy pale and blear-eyed, and by habit talkative and loud, the friendſhip of the good

parſon

parſon ſuggeſted her as the fitteſt perſon in the world to exerciſe my patience for a few months, and inure me to the diſcipline of my future function. In this ſtation I made a vaſt progreſs in a little time; for I not only heard above a thouſand ſermons, but the ſtrict obſervance of my vow of attention having made me a favourite, I was complained to whenever any thing went amiſs in the family, and often ſcolded at for the huſband, whoſe office grew into a fine cure: inſomuch, that if I had not known the ſincerity and uprightneſs of his heart, I ſhould have ſuſpected him of bringing me into his houſe to ſupply for him all thoſe duties which he wanted to be eaſed of. But he had no ſuch intereſted views; for as ſoon as he found his helpmate had transfuſed into me a neceſſary portion of patience and long-ſuffering, he recommended me to my fortune, giving me, generous man! a coat and wig, which formerly himſelf, and before him the ſquire, had worn for many years upon extraordinary days. Having thus equipt me, he reſumed the duties of his family, where he officiates to this day with true chriſtian reſignation.

My firſt reception was at the houſe of a gentleman, who in the early part of his life had followed the ſtudy of botany. Nature and truth are ſo pleaſing to the mind of man, that they never ſatiate. Alas! he happened one day to taſte, by miſtake, a root that had been ſent him from the Indies: it was a moſt ſubtle poiſon, to which his experience in Britiſh ſimples knew no antidote. Immediately upon his death, a neighbouring gentleman who had his eye upon me ſome time, ſent me an invitation. His diſcourſe was upon huſbandry; and as he never deceived me in any thing but where he deceived himſelf, I heard Him alſo with pleaſure.

These were therefore my halcyon days, on which I always reflect with regret and tears. How different were the ſucceeding ones, in which I have liſtened to the tales of old maids running over an endleſs liſt of lovers they never had; of old beaux who boaſted of favours from ladies they never ſaw; of ſenators who narrated the eloquence they never ſpoke! giving me ſuch a diſguſt

diſguſt and nauſea to lies, that at length my ears, which were at that time much too quick for my office, grew unable to bear them. But prudently conſidering that I muſt either hear or ſtarve, I invented the following expedient for qualifying a lie. While I aſſented by ſome geſticulation, or motion of the head, eyes, or muſcles of the face, I reſolved to have in reſerve ſome inward expreſſion of diſſent. Of theſe I had various; but for the ſake of brevity, I ſhall only trouble you with one.

A YOUNGER brother, who had ſerved abroad all his life, as he would frequently tell us, and who came unexpectedly to the eſtate and caſtle where he found me with a good character, took ſo kindly to me that he ſeemed to deſire no other companion; and as a proof of it, never ſent to invite or add to our company any one of the numerous friends he ſo often talked of, of great rank, bravery and honour, who would have gone to the end of the world to have ſerved him. I could have loved Him too, but for one fault. He would LIE without meaſure or diſguiſe. His uſual exaggeration was——*and more*. As thus, "At "the ſiege of Monticelli" (a town in Italy, as he told us) "I received in ſeveral parts of my body three and "twenty ſhot, *and more*. At the battle of Caratha" (in Turkey) "I rode to death eighteen horſes, *and* "*more*. With Lodamio, the Bavarian general, I drank "hand to fiſt, ſix dozen of old hock, *and more*." Upon all ſuch occaſions I inwardly anticipated him, by ſubſtituting in the place of his laſt two words, the two following——*or leſs*. But it ſo happened one unfortunate evening, as he was in the midſt of the ſharpeſt engagement ever heard of, in which with his ſingle broad-ſword he had killed five hundred, *and more*, that I kept my time more preciſely than my ſilence; for unhappily the qualifying *or leſs*, which ſhould have been tacitly ſwallowed for the quieting of my own ſpirit, was ſo audibly articulated to the inflaming of his, that the moment he heard ſubjoined to his five hundred——*or leſs*, the fury of his reſentment deſcended on my ear with a violent blow of his fiſt. By this ſlip of my tongue I loſt my poſt in that family, and the hearing of my left ear.

THE

THE conſequences of this accident gave me great apprehenſions for a conſiderable time; for the ſlighteſt cold affecting the other ear, I was freqently rebuked for miſplacing my marks of approbation. But I ſoon diſcovered that it was no real misfortune; for experience convinced me, that abſolute ſilence was of greater eſtimation than the beſt-timed ſyllable of interruption. It is to this experience that I ſhall refer you, after having recounted the laſt memorable adventure of my unfortunate hiſtory.

THE laſt family that received me was ſo numerous in relations and viſitors, that I found I ſhould be very little regarded when I had worn off the character of ſtranger; though as ſuch I was as earneſtly applied to as any high court of appeals. For as the force of liquor co-operated with the force of blood, they one and all addreſſed themſelves to me to ſettle the antiquity of their families; vociferating at one and the ſame time above a ſcore of genealogies. This was a harder ſervice than any I had ever been uſed to; and the whole weight of the clamour falling on my only ſurviving ear, unhappily overpowered it, and I became from that inſtant totally deaf.

HAD this accident happened a few years ſooner, it would have driven me into deſpair: but my experience, aſſuring me that I am now much better qualified than ever, gives me an expectation of making my fortune: I therefore apply to you to recommend me for a HEARER, in a country where there is better encouragement, and where I doubt not of giving ſatisfaction.

I SHALL not trouble you with enumerating the advantages attending a deaf HEARER: it will be enough for me to ſay, that as ſuch, I am no longer ſubject to the danger of an irreſiſtable ſmile; nor will my ſqueamiſh diſlike to lies bring me again into diſgrace. I ſhall now be exempt from the many misfortunes which my ungovernable ears have formerly led me into. What reproving looks have I had for turning my eyes when I have heard a bird fly againſt the window, or the dog and cat quarrelling in a corner of the room? How have I been reprimanded, when detected in dividing my attention between